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Southern District of New York*

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**U.S. CHARGES CONNECTICUT MAN WITH USING INTERNET  
TO ENTICE '12-YEAR-OLD GIRL' TO ENGAGE IN SEX**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that STEPHEN ARNOLD was arrested yesterday at the Nanuet Mall in Rockland County, New York, when he attempted to meet a 12-year-old girl that he had allegedly enticed over the Internet to engage in sexual activity with him.

According to the federal criminal Complaint filed yesterday, the arrest was the result of an undercover investigation by the Rockland County Sheriff's Office, in which a detective pretended, during a series of Internet communications, to be a 12-year-old girl.

The Complaint alleges that on March 30, 2003, ARNOLD entered an IRC Relay Internet chat room called "ltlgirlsexchat" and initiated a conversation with "lissizy12," who indicated that she is a 12 year old girl from New York. Using his "screen

name," ARNOLD asked: "u do sex with older guys?" "Lissizyl2" said: "not yet." ARNOLD said, "i would love to be your 1st." He suggested that they meet in a motel, where he would pay for the room. ARNOLD said that they could "get naked" and that "Lissizyl2" could "have sex with me." "Lissizyl2" ended the conversation by saying "ill try to come back [to this Internet chat room] if mom lets me."

According to the Complaint, on April 8, 2003, ARNOLD had another Internet chat in which he graphically suggested that "Lissizyl2" meet and have sex with him. "Lissizyl2" said that she lives near the Nanuet Mall in Rockland County and is named "Alissa." ARNOLD said that his name is "Steve." "Alissa" asked "Steve" whether he had ever had sex before with a 12-year-old girl, and "Steve" said he had.

The Complaint alleges that in another Internet chat on April 9, 2003, "Alissa" asked whether the defendant is still seeing the other 12-year-old girl that he said he had been with. When the defendant replied that the other girl is too far away, "Alissa" replied, "good ... i want to be your only 12 year old." The Complaint also alleges that during this Internet chat on April 9, 2003, ARNOLD asked: "you are not a cop or anything? right?" "Alissa" replied, "your funny." ARNOLD explained: "i can get in trouble u know, right?"

According to the Complaint, in an e-mail on April 17, 2003, ARNOLD asked "Alissa" what grade she is in. On or about

April 21, 2003, she sent an e-mail reply in which she said that she is in 6th grade.

The Complaint alleges that in a series of further Internet communications, defendant ARNOLD enticed "Alissa" to meet him on the morning of May 13, 2003, at a particular location in the Nanuet Mall, and he said that he would be wearing jeans, a green jacket and a blue cap.

Yesterday, physical surveillance was performed at the Nanuet Mall by the United States Secret Service and the Rockland County Sheriff's Office. According to the Complaint, ARNOLD was seen going to the designated meeting point, wearing jeans and a green jacket, and meeting the height and weight description he had given to "Alissa". He was arrested at that point.

QUESTION: MAY POST-ARREST ADMISSIONS BE INCLUDED? The Complaint further alleges that after being arrested, ARNOLD voluntarily provided oral and written statements in which, among other things, he admitted that he had become interested in underage children approximately two years ago and that he had visited Internet Relay Chat sites to engage in conversations with underage children and had traveled to the Nanuet Mall to meet "Alli" for the purpose of going to a motel and engaging in sexual intercourse.

The maximum sentence, upon conviction, for using the Internet to attempt to entice a minor to engage in sexual activity is 15 years in prison.

ARNOLD was arraigned late yesterday in White Plains federal court by United States Magistrate Judge LISA MARGARET SMITH. The Government sought pretrial detention, arguing that the defendant poses a danger to the community as well as a risk of flight. Magistrate Judge Smith granted bail but ordered that the defendant be confined to his home under electronic monitoring, except for travel to work, to court and to meet with his attorney, the Pretrial Services Agency, and medical appointments. The court ordered that the defendant must surrender all home computers and other devices that can access the Internet, and may not use the Internet except at work, for work purposes. Magistrate Judge Smith imposed additional conditions, including strict supervision by the Pretrial Services Agency, and forbidding the defendant from having any unsupervised contact with minors. The defendant is also required to undergo sex-specific mental health evaluation and to under any mental health treatment that may be directed by the Pretrial Services Agency.

According to the Complaint, ARNOLD is a 31-year-old naturalized United States citizen who was born in India and who

currently lives in Stamford, Connecticut. During the appearance in court, the defendant stated that he has an MBA degree. The defendant is being held in custody until at least one financially responsible person co-signs his \$50,000 personal recognizance bond. A second financially responsible co-signer is required by the close of business on May 16, 2003.

Mr. COMEY praised the efforts of the office of Rockland County Computer Crimes Task Force and of the United States Secret Service, which worked jointly on this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney MICHAEL L. TABAK is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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